

**The Tank Killers: Images, 1941-1943**



122759: A prototype M3 (T12) fires during training in August 1941 at Ft. Meade, Maryland, the first home of the Tank Destroyer Force. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



125695: Second Corps Provisional Antitank Battalion "blitz troops" maneuver in North Carolina in November 1941. Such units were predecessors to the tank destroyers. These men are from Battery B, 44th Infantry Division. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



138723: An early M3 tank destroyer at Camp Hood, Texas, in summer 1942. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



144246: An M3 on maneuvers in 1942. A larger gun shield was added in response to combat reports from the Philippines. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



147199: The M3 gun crew (left to right): gunner, loader, commander. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



122762: VIPs examine a swamp buggy mounting a 37mm gun. TD outfits received this stopgap before being issued the no less ludicrous M6. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



188671: The woefully inadequate M6 tank destroyer.  
(National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



410175: A sign at the entrance to the tank destroyer section of Camp Hood, Texas, displays the black panther crushing a tank in its jaws that served as the TD symbol. Camp Hood became the home of the Tank Destroyer Force in September 1942. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)





238973-1: Tank destroyer men undergo battle conditioning at Camp Hood. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



147205: TD crews were commando-trained to seek out enemy tanks after the loss of their own vehicle and destroy them with Molotov cocktails and sticky bombs. In practice, they did not do so. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



168604: Tank destroyers fire at a November 1942 Army war show in Texas. Many miles away, the first TDs were going to war. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



111-FB-51\_1: An American soldier clammers down the side of a transport into a landing craft off Oran, Algeria, shortly before the nation's first amphibious assault in the war aimed at Hitler's Reich. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



438198: An M3 tank destroyer in Oran, Algeria. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



172531: The TDs' first tank kills in Algeria were French models similar to these, parading for Lt. Gen. George S. Patton Jr. in Rabat. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



170093: An M3 finds a hull-down position in the Tunisian desert. But the long flat vista behind the wadi illustrates why this was often difficult to do. (Patton Armor Museum, Signal Corps photo)



111-CR-1\_3: The battle view of gun crews in the M3 tank destroyer. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)





242-MID-2520\_1: Company B of the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion on 22 November 1942 ran into Italian M 13/40 medium tanks such as these at El Guettar and knocked out three. (National Archives, Italian newsreel)



111-ADC-1094\_4: Mark III tanks were a common German foe in North Africa. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



111-ADC-1094\_1: A German 88mm dual purpose gun fires in North Africa. The towed 88s wreaked havoc on American tanks and helped inspire the decision to convert half the Tank Destroyer Force to towed guns. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



111-ADC-1094\_2: A flight of JU-87 Stukas attacks targets in North Africa. The Germans enjoyed air supremacy over the front for most of the campaign, and the tank destroyer men learned to fear these dive-bombers. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



170129: A recon jeep (far right) and M6 TD (far left) during fighting at Sbeitla on 17 February 1943. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



167572: A reconnaissance team from the 894th Tank Destroyer Battalion begins a mission at Kasserine Pass in February 1943. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



167578: A reconnaissance man sweeps for mines at Kasserine Pass in February 1943. This would become a frequent job for Recon. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



167611: A reconnaissance team from the 894th Tank Destroyer Battalion (right) passes a wrecked M3 "Purple Heart box" in Kasserine Pass in February 1943. Several destroyed tanks are visible in the middle distance. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)





PAM1: The M3 did not offer much protection. This one was destroyed in Tunisia. (Patton Armor Museum, Signal Corps photo)



171896: Captain Michael Paulick (front left) from Reconnaissance Company, 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion, examines a map at El Guettar on 23 March 1943. The recon peep behind Paulick carries the pedestal-mounted .30-caliber machine gun. The M3 TD in the background is in one of the defilade positions from which the Americans pounded the 10th Panzer Division. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



173831: View from American lines of the 10th Panzer Division attacking the 1st Infantry Division at El Guettar. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



111-ADC-1803\_F1: The ghostly form of an M3 tank destroyer adds to the dust cloud raised by an armored column in Tunisia in April 1943—only weeks before the ad hoc vehicle faded from active service with the Army. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



111-ADC-1803\_F1: The M10 emerges as the new backbone of the Tank Destroyer Force, a role it would play through the end of the war. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



172473: One of the first M10s committed to battle. This one near Maknassy, Algeria, in early April 1943 belongs to the 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)

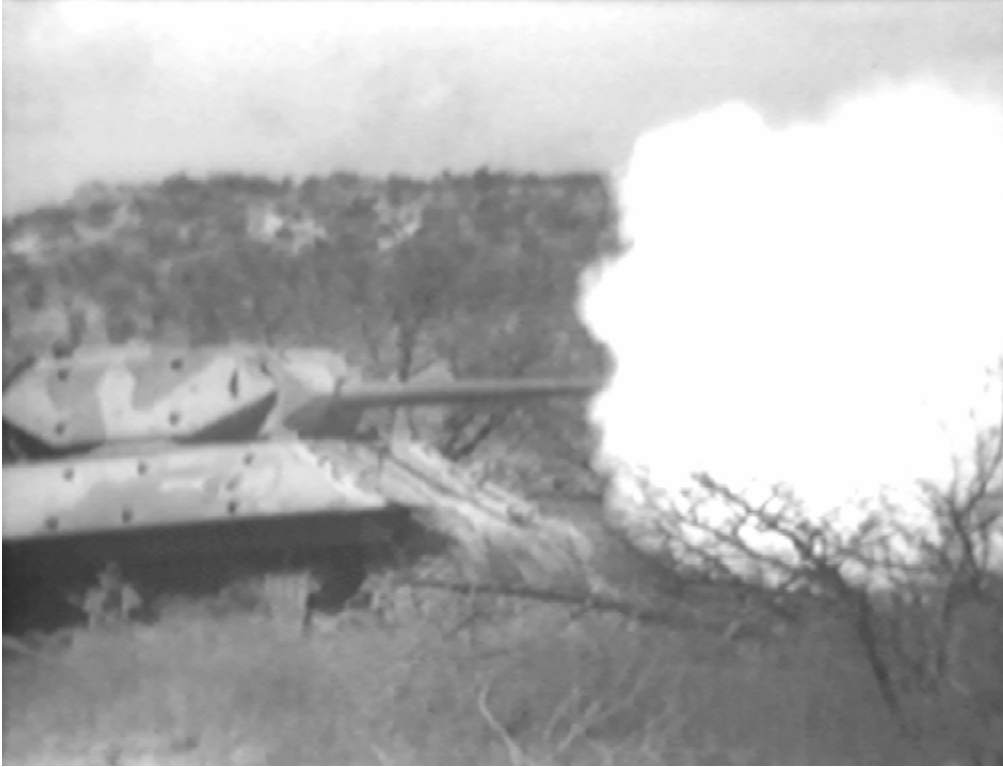


172474: A light tank issued to recon, 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion, near Maknassy. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



111-ADC-1168\_2: An M10 pulls into position in a cloud of dust. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)





111-ADC-1168\_2: The M10 fires its 3" gun. Tank crews that used the later 76mm variant of this weapon complained that the muzzle blast was so great that the gunner had difficulty sensing the round, but tank destroyer records do not reflect similar difficulties. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



111-ADC-1168\_3: Interior of the fighting compartment shows the commander on the right looking over the turret top, the gunner crouched at his sight to the left of the gun, and the loader inserting a 3" round. The leather tanker helmets vice steel pots reveal that this crew is not in combat. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



111-ADC-1168\_4: The gun has just fired and is almost fully recoiled. The shell casing is just beginning to eject from the breech. The loader crouches behind the gunner.  
(National Archives, Signal Corps film)



189896: The towed 3" gun undergoing testing at Aberdeen Proving Grounds. The Signal Corps caption observes, "Army Ordnance Department tests have proved the 3" antitank gun as superior to the German 88mm antitank gun as an antitank weapon." Ordnance was wrong. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



181364: Staff Sergeant Raymond G. Murphy and the crew of the "Jinx," who were awarded silver stars for their 25-minute spree of destruction against the German counterattack at Salerno. Left to right: Murphy, Sgt. Edwin Yost, T/5 Alvin Johnson, PFC Joseph O'Bryan, and privates Clyde and Clasoe Tokes, twins from Oklahoma. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)



111-CR-1\_4: 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion guns shell San Pietro, Italy, before the bloody infantry assault on the town in late November 1943. The mountainous terrain—which started just behind the Salerno beachhead—often relegated the TDs to artillery roles. (National Archives, Signal Corps film)



184295: No. 3 gun (M10), 2d Platoon, Company A, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion, shells the enemy in the Mignano sector, Italy, in December 1943. (National Archives, Signal Corps photo)